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National student writing contest returns to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity across Canada and right here in Halton Mississauga Dufferin!

### **Burlington, Ontario**

Since 2007, students in Grades 4, 5 and 6 have shared what home means to them in a national writing contest that is now open and accepting entries. Submissions are being accepted by mail or online at [meaningofhome.ca](http://meaningofhome.ca) from today until February 24, 2023.

Housing continues to be an important concern for all Canadians, including children, who understand how housing can provide their family with a safe place – a place to study, pursue their dreams and build a better life. Every student who enters the contest will help Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga-Dufferin build safe and affordable homes because every entry earns a \$10 donation towards their local Habitat for Humanity. Three grand prize winners will each receive a \$30,000 grant to help a local Habitat for Humanity build a place to call home for a family in need of affordable housing. In addition, nine runners up will receive a \$10,000 grant for their local Habitat for Humanity. Winners will be announced by June.

Founded by Sagen™<sup>1</sup>, the Meaning of Home contest has raised over \$2 million to help local Habitats across Canada build decent and affordable housing. Last year over 13,000 entries were received, the largest number of submissions Habitat Canada has ever received for this contest and raised over \$311,000.

Our local affiliate has been fortunate to have many winners over the years, including Rylan from Oakville's grand prize win in 2022 and two winners in 2021: Kara from Orangeville and Mya from Georgetown.

"Since 2016, the Meaning of Home contest and the youth who have participated have generated over **\$150,000** to our affiliate to serve more working low-income families in our communities", says Eden Grodzinski CEO Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga-Dufferin.

"It is so wonderful to see the enthusiastic response each year from parents, teachers and especially the children, who enter this contest and share what home means to them in their own words," says Julia Deans, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Canada. "We know that having a safe and affordable place to call home helps people build better lives and stronger communities."

"As a founding sponsor of this contest, we continue to be amazed at the creativity of each student who participates," says Stuart Levings, President and CEO, Sagen. "We are proud to see how this contest provides students with an opportunity to learn more about the importance of housing and give back."

The Meaning of Home contest would not be possible without the generous support of Founding Sponsor Sagen™ and Awards Sponsors Urban Systems Foundation, Face to Face Games, and Home Trust.

### **About Sagen™**

As a sponsor since 2000, Sagen has donated over \$5 million in support of Habitat Canada and has helped thousands of Canadian families realize their dreams of affordable homeownership. While Sagen's financial support provides crucial funding for Habitat Canada's homeownership program, its support extends far

beyond. Throughout the sponsorship, Sagen employees, including President and CEO Stuart Levings and his executive team, have lent their leadership experience, industry knowledge and time to help launch many of Habitat's signature programs, including the Sagen Homebuilding Grants, the Global Village Volunteer Program in Canada and the Meaning of Home Contest. These programs, along with Sagen's support and involvement in them, has significantly increased Habitat Canada's ability to raise funds, recruit volunteers and, ultimately, support more families and build stronger communities. Find out more at [www.sagen.ca](http://www.sagen.ca)

### **About Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga-Dufferin**

Habitat HMD is a charitable, non-profit housing provider that serves the communities of Halton, Mississauga and Dufferin. Since 1999, we have built a total of 69 affordable homes. Our mission is "to empower lower income, working families to build strength, stability, and independence by providing affordable housing that enables financial equity and lasting change."

Our housing model fills an important gap in the housing continuum – it provides a "pathway to home ownership." It helps lift people (who no longer qualify for government-assisted housing but have nowhere to go) out of community housing. And it provides a viable alternative to market rental housing, which does not generate any wealth for tenants. By providing families with access to equity-generating affordable housing options, Habitat is making vital efforts to help combat the housing crisis in Canada. Please visit our website for more information: [www.habitathm.ca](http://www.habitathm.ca).

### **About Habitat for Humanity Canada**

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national charitable organization working towards a world where everyone has a decent and affordable place to call home. Habitat Canada brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. With the help of volunteers, Habitat homeowners and 48 local Habitats working in every province and territory, we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in Canada and around the world. Habitat for Humanity Canada is a member of Habitat for Humanity International, which was established in 1976 and has grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in more than 70 countries. For more information, please visit [www.habitat.ca](http://www.habitat.ca)

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